

Security to foreign tourists

2999. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that safety and security is a main factor that prohibits foreign tourists from visiting the country particularly female tourists;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken/proposed to be taken by Government in this regard;

(c) whether Government have taken up the issues such as safety, security and cheating of foreign tourists with the State Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the achievements made/proposed to be made in regard to attract more foreign tourists in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Safety and security of tourists is important for promotion of tourism.

(b) and (c) In order to ensure safety and security of foreign tourists, the Ministry of Tourism has advised all the State Government/Union Territories to deploy Tourist Police at important Tourist centres. The State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa, Kerala, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, etc. have deployed Tourist Police in one form or another.

(d) During the year 2005 foreign tourist arrivals within the country were 3.92 million *i.e.* an increase of 13.2% as compared to the previous year.

Strategies to attract foreign tourists

30.00. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that lack of concrete strategies, infrastructure and tourist related information in our country has led to tremendous growth in leisure, religions and medical tourism in South East Asian countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the concrete steps proposed to be taken by Government to divert foreign tourists towards India?